

**Weekly Status & Information Report:
Week of March 3 - March 7, 2008**

- 1. Water Main Replacement:** WSSC (Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission) has begun a major water main replacement project on Carroll Avenue. The project will run from Lincoln Avenue to Westmoreland Avenue and will include removal and replacement of the water main. The WSSC contract manager for the project is Bernard Windsor, 301-206-7339 or Bwindso@wsscwater.com. The project is expected to take many months. *(Public Works)*
- 2. Opening Celebration, Ethiopian Exhibit - Saturday, March 8:** Please join us this Saturday, March 8, at 2:30p.m. as we celebrate the work of seven local Ethiopian artists. The opening reception includes a sampling of traditional foods, an Ethiopian coffee ceremony, dance, music, and an exhibit of children's art. The event is organized by Art for the People in partnership with the Takoma Park Community Action Group, the City of Takoma Park's Recreation Department, and the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission. The exhibit will be on display throughout the month of March. *(Housing and Community Development)*
- 3. Long Branch-Sligo Neighborhood Traffic Calming Testing (Ward 2):** Three temporary traffic control patterns will be tested in the Long Branch- Sligo neighborhood over the course of the next six weeks (concluding on April 11). Each of the options will be tested for a period of two weeks. The purpose of the tests is to assess different methods of reducing traffic volumes on neighborhood residential streets. Similar tests will be conducted in the New Hampshire Gardens and Pinecrest neighborhoods; however, test dates have yet to be determined. *(Housing and Community Development)*
- 4. Saturday's Mini-Trail Rehabilitation Postponed to March 15 (Ward 4):** Due to expected weather conditions this weekend, the planned trail project has been postponed to March 15. Volunteers are still needed. As noted in past S&I reports, the Takoma Park Safe Routes to School Program is partnering with Takoma Park Middle School to clean up the small trail behind the school. If you are interested in volunteering for this project, join us at 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 8, in the back parking lot of the Takoma Park Middle School near the tennis courts at 7611 Piney Branch Road. Be sure to wear your work clothes! Contact Lucy Neher at Lucyn@takomagov.org to sign up and for more information. *(Housing and Community Development)*
- 5. "What Color is Your Trash Can?" Open House this Monday, March 10:** Stop by the Takoma Park Community Center Lobby this coming Monday, March 10 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and let us know how you think our neighborhood commercial areas can become more attractive. Attendees will be asked to help select small scale improvements such as landscaping and street furniture for installation this Spring. The commercial areas to be considered during the open house include Erie/Flower Avenues, Flower Ave/Piney Branch Road, Sligo Creek/NH Ave, the Maryland Gateway (New Hampshire Avenue from Poplar to Eastern), Maple Avenue, and Old Takoma (Old Town & Takoma Junction). For more information, please call 301-891-7119. *(Housing and Community Development)*
- 6. You are invited - New Hampshire Avenue Community Greening and Gardening Meeting this Wednesday, March 12:** Interested in learning more about community gardens and greening opportunities along the New Hampshire Avenue corridor? Please

join us on Wednesday, March 12, from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Recreation Center (7315 New Hampshire Avenue). For more information, call 301- 891-7119. *(Housing and Community Development)*

7. FINAL CALL for Functional Art along the Metropolitan Branch Trail - March 13:

The Arts and Humanities Commission is seeking proposals for the fabrication and installation of original artwork - preferably functional artwork such as benches, tables and bike racks - along the Metropolitan Branch Trail. Proposals are due this coming Thursday, March 13. For more information, please contact David Suls at 301-891-7219. *(Housing and Community Development)*

8. Third Thursday Poetry Reading - March 13: The poetry of Teri Ellen Cross and Patricia Murphy will be featured at this month's "third thursday" poetry reading. The reading will be held on Thursday, March 13 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium at the Takoma Park Community Center. *(Housing and Community Development)*

9. Housing Department Offers Free Classes to Tenants - March 18: "Know Your Rights as a Tenant," a class specifically for tenants living in Takoma Park, is being offered free of charge on Tuesday, March 18, from 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue. Learn how to protect your security deposit, what to do when your landlord enters your unit without notification and what to do if your landlord increases the rent above the rent stabilization allowance. To register, call 301-891-7222. *(Housing and Community Development)*

10. Takoma Park Poet Laureate offers free Poetry Workshop for High School Students - March 18, April 1 and 8: Anne Becker, Takoma Park Poet Laureate, will offer a free poetry workshop for high school students - beginners and experienced writers alike - beginning Tuesday, March 18. Various elements of poetry will be introduced in discussion and in reading model poems. Participants will write their own poems, read them to the group and receive feedback to deepen and enlarge their own understanding of what they have written. The poems generated during the workshop will be gathered into an anthology and published by the Arts and Humanities Commission. To register, please call 301-891-7224. *(Housing and Community Development)*

11. Public Art Presentations - Tuesday, April 1: Learn more about the thirteen proposals the Arts and Humanities Commission received in response to its recent call for public art. The individual proposals are to be presented for public review and comment on Tuesday, April 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium at the Takoma Park Community Center. Additional information on the individual proposals will be posted on the City's web site prior to the planned presentation. *(Housing and Community Development)*

12. Free First time Homebuyer Seminar - April 12 and May 10: Are you preparing to become a homeowner? You will want to attend Takoma Park's free First Time Home Buyer Seminar on Saturday, April 12, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center. Learn how to improve your credit score, obtain a mortgage, understand the terms of your loan, and what first time home buyer programs are available to purchasers in Montgomery County. The seminar will be offered in Spanish on May 10. To register for either seminar, call 301-891-7222. *(Housing and Community Development)*

13. Tax Assistance Programs Help Low-Income Earners:

- The Community Action Agency's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) offers FREE tax assistance to individuals with low-to-moderate incomes and is available to help eligible individuals receive the newly passed Stimulus Payments from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Stimulus payments range from \$300 to \$600 for single individuals and up to \$1200 for married couples filing jointly, with an additional \$300 for each child under age 17. For more information go to www.irs.gov and click on Stimulus Payments. To schedule an appointment for free tax assistance at Community Action's Silver Spring office, call Karen Fisher at 301-565-7451.
- The Gilchrist Center, located at 11319 Elkins Street in Wheaton, Maryland, also has a program that helps low income residents complete their income tax forms. Services are available from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. every Sunday through April 13. Walk-ins are welcome. Single residents with no more than \$22,000 annual income and families with no more than \$35,000 annual income qualify for this service. To contact the Gilchrist Center, call 240-777-4940. *(Housing and Community Development)*

14. Holla at Me! Showing Young Men the Way!: The bi - monthly meeting of Holla at Me hosted 23 young men on Wednesday evening in the Takoma Park Community Center T*Zone. The young men discussed the recent teen trip to the movie theater. One participant wanted to discuss how the group needs to show appreciation for the opportunities that are provided for them. Clayton White, the group facilitator, talked about appropriate behavior on field trips, as well as appropriate behavior in the Community Center. Holla at Me targets young men 12 to 18 years old. The group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. *(Recreation)*

15. Save the Date!: March 19 is the date of the Community Priority Setting Workshop regarding the Takoma Metro development. An open house begins at 6:00 pm and the program runs from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the Auditorium of the Takoma Park Community Center. Look for the special insert in the March issue of the Takoma Park Newsletter for more information. *(Deputy City Manager)*

16. What's on City TV?: City TV video crews will be covering the Ethiopian Art Exhibit on Saturday, March 9, here at the Community Center. Next Tuesday night, City TV will be broadcasting live an event cosponsored by the Committee on the Environment and the Old Town Business Association called "Energy Star Presentation for Small Business." More information is available on the city website. *(City TV)*

17. Search Engine: City Web staff are testing a new, Google-based search engine for the City web site. Web visitors are invited to test it and give feedback to the web team. The new search box is located on the top left of the City site at www.takomaparkmd.gov. *(City TV)*

18. The Chief & Officers in Meetings:

- On March 3, Mayor Williams, Councilmember Seamens, City Manager Barb Matthews, and Chief Ricucci attended the swearing-in of new police officer, Charles Hoetzel.
- On March 4, CSAFE, in collaboration with other Two County Turning Point Mural Partners, held a fund-raiser at El Golfo Restaurant. Over 100 people attended. To learn more about the project, go to <http://www.artsontheblock.org/>.
- On March 5, CSAFE HEAT Team met with parole and probation agents, police and community prosecutors.

- Also on March 5, Ms. Catherine Plevy (Chief Ricucci's Executive Assistant), Ms. Dean (Victim-Witness Coordinator) and Ms. Luy (Crime Analyst) met with Lonni Moffet and Patrick Rittenhouse of the City's Communications Office to begin a process of updating and modernizing the City web site regarding police information.
- On March 7, Chief Ricucci met with eligible officers to discuss the promotional process to Corporal. *(Police)*

19. Officers in Training: On March 3, the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) met with the Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOCEN) for training in the City. *(Police)*

20. Traffic Enforcement: Officers conducted at least 115 traffic stops, which resulted in citations, two (2) vehicle impounds and one (1) DUI arrest.

During the week of February 29 - March 7, the following details were completed:

- New Hampshire Avenue (speeding) - conducted three (3) details for three (3) hours and issued three (3) warnings and three (3) state citations.
 - Carroll Avenue (speeding) - conducted one (1) detail for one (1) hour and issued two (2) warnings.
 - 4th Avenue at Cockerille Avenue (stop sign) - issued one (1) warning and one (1) state citation.
 - University Boulevard (speeding) - conducted a two (2) hour detail and issued four (4) warnings.
- (Police)*

21. Signs of the Times: Signs are being placed around the parking lot at the Community Center. Enforcement of most of the signs will go into effect as of Monday, March 31. There are more handicapped spaces due to the success of our Senior programs. Other building signs will be installed over the next few months. *(Deputy City Manager)*